

Message Text

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TO CG FT CHAFFEE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 237659

FOL REPEAT PARIS 25587 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO

BANGKOK SINGAPORE HONG KONG OCT 3

QTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 25587

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, CASC, VS, FR

SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES

REF: (A) STATE 224770; (B) HELSINKI 1947;

(C) BANGKOK 20633; (D) STATE 231945

SUMMARY: EMBOFFS PASSED LISTS OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES WHO WISH TO GO TO FRANCE TO QUAI AND ASKED ABOUT GOF REPLY TO USG REQUESTS CONVEYED BY UNDER SECRETARY INGERSOLL. QUAI TOOK THE LISTS, BUT HAD AS YET NO STATEMENT ABOUT THEIR UTILITY TO GOF. GOF DOES NOT YET HAVE FORMAL RESPONSE TO UNDER SECRETARY'S REQUESTS. QUAI GAVE THE USUAL RUNDOWN CONCERNING THE FRENCH MONTHLY QUOTA AND THE HIGHER PRIORITY FOR REFUGEES FROM SEA. QUAI WAS AWARE THAT PRACTICE OF ACCEPTING FIRST ONLY HEAD OF FAMILY WAS NOT SATISFACTORY.

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END SUMMARY

1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS REF (A), EMBOFFS SAW QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR ADMINISTRATIVE CONVENTIONS AND CONSULAR AFFAIRS, JEANNOT, IN THE ABSENCE OF AMBASSADOR CHAYET. IN ADDITION TO PASSING INDIAN TOWN GAP LIST WE ALSO PASSED SOME UNCLASSIFIED LISTS FROM FT. CHAFFEE ET AL. WE TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE OCCASION TO ASK WHETHER THERE WAS AS YET ANY FORMAL FRENCH GOVERNMENT REPLY TO UNDER SECRETARY INGERSOLL'S REQUEST (REF B) THAT GOF ACCEPT MORE RAPIDLY THE INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN U.S. SYSTEM WHO WISH TO COME TO FRANCE. WE ASKED WHETHER PROVIDING SUCH LISTS IN PARIS WAS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY OF HELPING THE FRENCH TO EXPEDITE SUCH CASES. JEANNOT, WHO SAID HE HAD BEEN ABSENT FROM PARIS WHEN THE INGERSOLL/DESTREMAU CONVERSATION TOOK PLACE, SAID THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THERE WAS AS YET ANY FORMAL FRENCH RESPONSE OTHER THAN THE EXPLANATIONS DESTREMAU GAVE AT THE TIME OF THE CONVERSATION. HE WOULD PURSUE THE MATTER WITHIN THE QUAI AND HOPED SOON TO AVE A REPLY, INCLUDING WHETHER PROVIDING IN PARIS THE LISTS PREPARED BY THE U.S. CAMPS ASSISTED THE GOF.

2. JEANNOT SAID THAT IT WAS HIS OPINION THAT FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR FRANCE TO TAKE SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS FROM THE U.S. SYSTEM, SINCE THE GOF REMAINS OPPOSED TO ESTABLISHING A SYSTEM OF LARGE CAMPS, THE GOF CONTINUED TO TAKE INDOCHINA REFUGEES FROM THAILAND IN FAIRLY CONSIDERABLE NUMBERS SO THAT ITS MONTHLY CAPACITY OF 1,000 TO 1,500 WAS PRETTY MUCH TAKEN UP BY REFUGEES IN SEA. JEANNOT NOTED THAT IN ADDITION TO THE CAMBODIANS AND VIETNAMESE, THE LAO WERE NOW COVERED BY THE FRENCH REFUGEE PROGRAM. IN ADDITION, THE GOF HAD ALREADY STARTED A PILOT PROGRAM FOR THE TAI DAM WHO HAD BEEN GREATLY COMPROMISEE BECAUSE OF THEIR ASSISTANCE TO THE FRENCH PRIOR TO 1954. THE TAI DAM WERE IN GENERAL "VERY PRIMITIVE" AND VERY DIFFICULT TO ASSIMILATE; BUT THE GOF WAS AT LEAST MAKING THE EFFORT. IF THE PILOT PROGRAM WORKS, THE NUMBER OF

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TAI DAM ARRIVING IN FRANCE COULD BE CONSIDERABLE. JEANNOT COMMENTED THAT CONTRARY TO EXPECTATIONS, MANY INDOCHINESE REFUGEES WITH ONLY LIMITED CAPABILITIES AND RUDIMENTARY OR NONEXISTENT FRENCH HAD PROVEN EASIER TO RESETTLE THAN THE MORE SOPHISTICATED, HIGHLY-EDUCATED, BILINGUAL PROFESSIONALS. ALTHOUGH THERE HAD BEEN SOME PROBLEMS RECENTLY IN THE EVACUATION OF FRENCH FROM

SAIGON, THIS PROGRAM CONTINUED TO TAKE SOME FRENCH RESOURCES. (JEANNOT COMMENTED THAT THE EVACUATION PROGRAM HAD BECOME BASICALLY A PRG PROGRAM: THE FRENCH ARE REQUIRED TO TAKE ANYONE PROPOSED BY THE PRG, OFTEN REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY COULD MOVE ON TO THE COUNTRIES OF THEIR NATIONALITY, REF C). (

3. WE RAISED AGAIN THE FRENCH PRACTICE OF APPROVING FIRST A VISA ONLY FOR THE HEAD OF FAMILY (REF D). JEANNOT SAID HE WAS ALSO UNAWARE OF A FORMAL GOF RESPONSE TO THE UNDER SECRETARY'S REQUEST ON THIS SUBJECT EITHER, BUT THAT THE GOF AGREED THAT IT WAS NOT A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION. SUCH A PROGRAM WOULD BE TOLERABLE ONLY IF THE HEAD OF FAMILY WAS PROCEEDING DIRECTLY TO AN ASSURED POSITION SO THAT HIS FAMILY WOULD BE ABLE TO JOIN HIM IN A PREDICTABLE PERIOD OF TWO WEEKS TO A MONTH.

4. COMMENT: WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE QUAI WILL TAKE ACTION ON THESE MATTERS AND PROVIDE US WITH ANY REPLY UNTIL AFTER AMBASSADOR CHAYET RETURNS FROM LEAVE. WE ARE INCLINED TO THINK THAT THE GOF WILL CONTINUE TO TRY TO MAINTAIN ITS CURRENT PACE OF 1,000 TO 1,500 REFUGEES PER MONTH, AND THAT THOSE IN U.S. SYSTEM WILL HAVE LOWER PRIORITY THAN THOSE CONSIDERED IN GREATER JEOPARDY IN SOUTH EAST ASIA. THERE MAY BE SOME IMPROVEMENT IN THE "HEAD OF FAMILY" SYSTEM.
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